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ABSTRACT

Implications for the planning of children's physical education programs are threefold. A philosophical statement should underlie the curriculum development. The objectives of the programs should reflect input from the practitioner and the researcher, as well as from the student. Teachers must become sensitive to the cognitive and affective aspects of sport and dance in addition to considering the psychomotor involvement required of the child. (Author/LH)

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MULTIVARIATE CONSIDERATIONS IN PLANNING CHILDREN'S PHYSICAL EDUCATION

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Planning is conceived as a complex process that includes content selection and determination of methodology, pace and incurrence of feedback on performance. The information and insights essential to the success of this process are multivariate in origin and interact in complex fashion. The role of the teacher becomes interwoven in the total intricate maze of partially understood and often misunderstood variables. The teacher of childrens' physical education must interpret, analyze and ultimately act upon these variables in designing an effective instructional program.

Most educators agree upon the premise that program development needs to be based upon a philosophy. The philosophy, in essence, is a statement of presumed truth. The essence of this truth therefore needs to be examined by both researcher and practitioner. In a sense, there needs to exist a proper theory-research balance creating a state of equilibrium between the research theorist and the applied practitioner. The theorist and practitioner must work together; each lending his expertise. The theorist lending theoretical basis for the investigation of relationship among the various competencies needed to construct a theoretical framework and the practitioner who can in turn analyze and interpret these competencies into a functioning curriculum.

Dissonance need not be the catalyst to the marriage of theorist and practitioner but rather acquiescence. Acquiescence in the sense of acceptance of the value of interchange of cognitive structures and the implementation of these structures.

The need for a philosophy underlies the curriculum itself. Logsdon (1977) proposes that no part of a curriculum design or implementation should fail to be influenced by the basic tenent; on which the philosophy is built. It becomes apparent that the underlying philosophy should influence decisions relevant to: (1) formulating objectives and goals, (2) developing the program, (3) designing learning experiences, (4) selecting methodological approaches used to stimulate learning, (5) delineating the roles and responsibilities of the teacher and student and (6) evaluating the program, instruction and learning.

The first consideration in developing or planning a physical education curriculum revolves around the basic objectives of the curriculum. What is to be accomplished. Dauer (1972), Schurr (1967) and Kirchner (1978) concur that certain objectives are instrumental to every physical education program. Included

in these are (1) the development and maintenance of a suitable level of physical fitness; (2) the gain of competence in management of the body and utilization of physical skills; (3) the formation of desirable social standards and ethical concepts and (4) the formation of a desirable self-concept and effective self-image. In order to accomplish these objectives on an individual basis, the physical education teacher must assess the needs and characteristics of the students. The teacher must recognize the integration of the cognitive, affective and psychomotor domains if the objectives are to be met. As with the integration of domains so comes the interrelationship of theory and practice. Since the interrelationships of the domains are so vital to the attainment of the objectives, this complex matrix needs to be understood. The relationship of the theorist to the practitioner is not unidirectional but rather reciprocal. The practitioner in a sense is the theorists' link to causal reality. The practitioner can assess, react and give insight into the complexities of the learning structure; information seldom available to the researcher.

In developing curricula the teacher needs to be aware of interplay of social interaction, self-esteem, movement competency and student satisfaction. When providing movement experiences the teacher needs to recognize what type of social demands are made upon the student. The teacher must identify the inherent patterns of social interaction which are prescribed by the structure of the activity and be cognizant of the respondent patterns which are encouraged. Through the identification of kinds of social interactions demands placed on the student in sport, dance and exercise forms the teacher can provide social experiences such that the student may master those innate demands in conjunction with the activityies' cognitive and psychomotor demands. Superimposing the student's self-concept over the social interaction demands of the activity the matrix becomes more complex. The student's level of self-esteem may determine the success or failure of attaining necessary social interactions demanded in the environment. Through the repetition of successful experiences the student enhances his interaction skills as well as his self-concept. Piaget (1951) purports the two major effects of play are functional pleasure and mastery. Children will repeat an already learned skill for the affective feeling of pleasure that the repetition brings. Through repetition the physical skill demanded from the task, the cognitive skills demanded from the task, and the affective pleasure derived from the task itself as well as from the successful completion of the task are ingrained in the child. Derived from the completion of the task is satisfaction which enhances the student's self-concept.

Kneer (1976) suggests if the spirit of play and involvement in physical activity is to occur, the student must be satisfied. Humans tend to avoid what is not satisfying and satisfaction is relevant to meeting the individual's unique needs. The educator must ask himself "What is necessary to increase the probability of satisfaction?" Since each student brings into

every learning experience the sum total of previous experiences whether it be the type or the quantity. Due to the variance in past experiences the goals of each student may vary. Similarly the goals of the students may not be akin to those of the teacher. Kneer (1972) reported that student satisfaction increased when teachers were given knowledge of student preferred goals prior to instruction. Teachers must also tolerate goals which are incongruent with their own.

The implications for the planning of childrens' physical education programs are straight-forward.

1. A philosophical statement should underlie the curriculum.
2. The objectives should reflect input from three levels: the practitioner, the researcher and the student.
3. The teacher needs to be aware of cognitive, affective as well as psychomotor skills demanded by the sport, dance and exercise form.

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